

# University Radio Observatories Program (AST-URO)

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## *Program Solicitation*

***NSF 02-076***

DIRECTORATE FOR MATHEMATICAL AND PHYSICAL SCIENCES  
DIVISION OF ASTRONOMICAL SCIENCES

**FULL PROPOSAL DEADLINE(S): May 23, 2002**



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# SUMMARY OF PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

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## GENERAL INFORMATION

**Program Title:** University Radio Observatories Program (AST-URO)

**Synopsis of Program:** The URO program provides support for operations, technical enhancements, scientific investigations, and student training at university-based radio facilities.

**Cognizant Program Officer(s):**

- Dr. Richard Barvainis, Program Director, MPS, AST, 1045, telephone: 703-292-4891, e-mail: [rbarvai@nsf.gov](mailto:rbarvai@nsf.gov).

**Applicable Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number(s):**

- 47.049 --- Mathematical and Physical Sciences

## ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

- **Organization Limit:** None
- **PI Eligibility Limit:** None
- **Limit on Number of Proposals:** None

## AWARD INFORMATION

- **Anticipated Type of Award:** Continuing Grant or Cooperative Agreement
- **Estimated Number of Awards:** 4-7
- **Anticipated Funding Amount:** \$9,000,000 for FY 2003 pending availability of funds

## PROPOSAL PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

### *A. Proposal Preparation Instructions*

- **Full Proposals:** Deviations From Standard Preparation Guidelines
  - The program announcement/solicitation contains deviations from the standard Grant Proposal Guide (GPG) proposal preparation guidelines. Please see the full program announcement/solicitation for further information.

### ***B. Budgetary Information***

- **Cost Sharing Requirements:** Cost Sharing is not required.
- **Indirect Cost (F&A) Limitations:** Not Applicable.
- **Other Budgetary Limitations:** Not Applicable.

### ***C. Deadline/Target Dates***

- **Letters of Intent (*optional*):** None
- **Preliminary Proposals (*optional*):** None
- **Full Proposal Deadline Date(s):** May 23, 2002

### ***D. FastLane Requirements***

- **FastLane Submission:** Required
- **FastLane Contact(s):**
  - Ms. Kim Elliot, Computer Specialist, MPS, AST, 1045, telephone: 703-292-4894, e-mail: [kelliot@nsf.gov](mailto:kelliot@nsf.gov).

## **PROPOSAL REVIEW INFORMATION**

- **Merit Review Criteria:** National Science Board approved criteria. Additional merit review considerations apply. Please see the full program announcement/solicitation for further information.

## **AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION**

- **Award Conditions:** Standard NSF award conditions apply.
- **Reporting Requirements:** Standard NSF reporting requirements apply.

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

The University Radio Observatories (URO) program of NSF's Division of Astronomical Sciences (AST) fills the need to support university-based radio astronomy at funding levels above those normally considered appropriate for individual investigator research grants. Historically, the URO program has supported a diverse range of radio facilities; currently, there are seven awardees operating four observatories and one telescope network.

This solicitation invites proposals for renewal support of current UROs and for the initiation of new UROs.

## **II. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

NFS-funded University Radio Observatories (UROs) serve as centers for focussed scientific research and technical development in radio astronomy through the collaborative involvement of faculty, research engineers, and students. The emphasis of the program is to maintain a presence for radio astronomy in the university environment, in order to foster innovation and train upcoming generations of students in the field. UROs also provide research opportunities of scope and risk not typically available at the National Centers.

Facilities currently supported include two millimeter-wavelength interferometer arrays, one submillimeter-wavelength single-dish telescope, one millimeter-wavelength single-dish telescope, and one coordinating center for millimeter-wavelength very long baseline interferometry. The URO program is not limited to the millimeter/submillimeter region, and proposals from across the radio spectrum will be considered. (Here the radio spectrum is defined as encompassing frequencies up to 1 TeraHertz.)

The URO program provides funding for telescope operations and for equipment development at existing facilities, and may support construction of new facilities. It also provides partial or full salary support for research faculty, engineers, and technicians; partial summer salary for teaching faculty; and stipend support for both graduate and undergraduate students.

The program's total base funding level for FY2001 was \$8,848,000. URO awards are for three-year intervals, and are renewable under the proposal review procedures described below. UROs fully funded by NSF are expected to provide the general astronomical community with access to between one-third and one-half of all telescope observing time. UROs should also develop and maintain a strong program of student education and training in radio astronomy, and should conduct public outreach activities appropriate to the location and nature of the facility.

For funding in FY2003 and subsequent years, all URO proposals will be reviewed together at three year intervals. This program solicitation will allow renewals of existing URO awards, as well as new proposals, to be judged relative to each other so that priorities can be set for the program as a whole. Proposed new activities will be competed against those currently supported. Achievements under prior NSF support will be critically assessed when proposals from current UROs are evaluated for possible renewal. Each proposal will be reviewed independently, by site visit panels where appropriate, and all proposals will subsequently be reviewed by an NSF overview panel.

In order for new URO applicants to participate in this review process, proposals should be submitted by the specified deadline. New applicants are encouraged to contact the Program Director for advice and additional information prior to developing a full proposal.

### **III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION**

The categories of proposers identified in the [Grant Proposal Guide](#) are eligible to submit proposals under this program announcement/solicitation.

### **IV. AWARD INFORMATION**

Estimated program budget, number of awards and average award size/duration are subject to the availability of funds. Approximately \$9 million dollars is anticipated in FY 2003. An estimated 4-7 awards will be made in the form of three-year continuing grants or cooperative agreements, with new proposals required for additional three-year renewals.

### **V. PROPOSAL PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS**

#### **A. Proposal Preparation Instructions**

##### **Full Proposal:**

Proposals submitted in response to this program announcement/solicitation should be prepared and submitted in accordance with the general guidelines contained in the NSF *Grant Proposal Guide* (GPG). The complete text of the GPG is available electronically on the NSF Web Site at: <http://www.nsf.gov/cgi-bin/getpub?gpg>. Paper copies of the GPG may be obtained from the NSF Publications Clearinghouse, telephone (301) 947-2722 or by e-mail from [pubs@nsf.gov](mailto:pubs@nsf.gov).

Proposals may deviate from standard NSF guidelines in that the Project Description section may be up to 35 pages long, rather than the standard 15 pages. Proposals should include a Scientific Program Plan, a Technical Program Plan, an Education and Outreach Program Plan, and a Management Plan.

Proposers are reminded to identify the program solicitation number (NSF 02-076) in the program announcement/solicitation block on the proposal Cover Sheet. Compliance with this requirement is critical to determining the relevant proposal processing guidelines. Failure to submit this information may delay processing.

#### **B. Budgetary Information**

Cost sharing is not required in proposals submitted under this Program Solicitation.

#### **C. Deadline/Target Dates**

Proposals must be submitted by the following date(s):

**Full Proposals by 5:00 PM local time: May 23, 2002**

## **D. FastLane Requirements**

Proposers are required to prepare and submit all proposals for this Program Solicitation through the FastLane system. Detailed instructions for proposal preparation and submission via FastLane are available at: <http://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/a1/newstan.htm>. For FastLane user support, call 1-800-673-6188 or e-mail [fastlane@nsf.gov](mailto:fastlane@nsf.gov).

*Submission of Electronically Signed Cover Sheets.* The Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) must electronically sign the proposal Cover Sheet to submit the required proposal certifications (see [Chapter II, Section C](#) of the Grant Proposal Guide for a listing of the certifications). The AOR must provide the required certifications within five working days following the electronic submission of the proposal. Further instructions regarding this process are available on the FastLane website at: <http://www.fastlane.nsf.gov>.

## **VI. PROPOSAL REVIEW INFORMATION**

### **A. NSF Proposal Review Process**

Reviews of proposals submitted to NSF are solicited from peers with expertise in the substantive area of the proposed research or education project. These reviewers are selected by Program Officers charged with the oversight of the review process. NSF invites the proposer to suggest, at the time of submission, the names of appropriate or inappropriate reviewers. Care is taken to ensure that reviewers have no conflicts with the proposer. Special efforts are made to recruit reviewers from non-academic institutions, minority-serving institutions, or adjacent disciplines to that principally addressed in the proposal.

The two merit review criteria are listed below. The criteria include considerations that help define them. These considerations are suggestions and not all will apply to any given proposal. While proposers must address both merit review criteria, reviewers will be asked to address only those considerations that are relevant to the proposal being considered and for which he/she is qualified to make judgements.

#### **What is the intellectual merit of the proposed activity?**

How important is the proposed activity to advancing knowledge and understanding within its own field or across different fields? How well qualified is the proposer (individual or team) to conduct the project? (If appropriate, the reviewer will comment on the quality of the prior work.) To what extent does the proposed activity suggest and explore creative and original concepts? How well conceived and organized is the proposed activity? Is there sufficient access to resources?

#### **What are the broader impacts of the proposed activity?**

How well does the activity advance discovery and understanding while promoting teaching, training, and learning? How well does the proposed activity broaden the participation of underrepresented groups (e.g., gender, ethnicity, disability, geographic, etc.)? To what extent will it enhance the infrastructure for research and education, such as facilities, instrumentation, networks, and partnerships? Will the results be disseminated broadly to enhance scientific and technological understanding? What may be the benefits of the proposed activity to society?

NSF staff will give careful consideration to the following in making funding decisions:

***Integration of Research and Education***

One of the principal strategies in support of NSF's goals is to foster integration of research and education through the programs, projects, and activities it supports at academic and research institutions. These institutions provide abundant opportunities where individuals may concurrently assume responsibilities as researchers, educators, and students and where all can engage in joint efforts that infuse education with the excitement of discovery and enrich research through the diversity of learning perspectives.

***Integrating Diversity into NSF Programs, Projects, and Activities***

Broadening opportunities and enabling the participation of all citizens -- women and men, underrepresented minorities, and persons with disabilities -- is essential to the health and vitality of science and engineering. NSF is committed to this principle of diversity and deems it central to the programs, projects, and activities it considers and supports.

**Additional Review Criteria**

How well does the program advance the techniques of radio astronomy, how strong is the proposed program of radio astronomical science, how effectively will students be trained in radio astronomy methods and instrumentation development, and does the program provide adequate observing time to the astronomical community?

A summary rating and accompanying narrative will be completed and submitted by each reviewer. In all cases, reviews are treated as confidential documents. Verbatim copies of reviews, excluding the identities of reviewers, are sent to the Principal Investigator/Project Director by the Program Director. In addition, the proposer will receive an explanation of the decision to award or decline funding.

**B. Review Protocol and Associated Customer Service Standard**

All proposals are carefully reviewed by at least three other persons outside NSF who are experts in the particular field represented by the proposal. Proposals submitted in response to this announcement/solicitation will be reviewed by Mail and/or Panel Review.

Reviewers will be asked to formulate a recommendation to either support or decline each proposal. The Program Officer assigned to manage the proposal's review will consider the advice of reviewers and will formulate a recommendation.

In most cases, proposers will be contacted by the Program Officer after his or her recommendation to award or decline funding has been approved by the Division Director. This informal notification is not a guarantee of an eventual award.

NSF is striving to be able to tell applicants whether their proposals have been declined or recommended for funding within six months. The time interval begins on the closing date of an announcement/solicitation or the date of proposal receipt (whichever is later). The interval ends when the Division Director accepts the Program Officer's recommendation.

In all cases, after programmatic approval has been obtained, the proposals recommended for funding will be forwarded to the Division of Grants and Agreements for review of business, financial, and policy implications and the processing and issuance of a grant or other agreement. Proposers are cautioned that only a Grants and Agreements Officer may make commitments, obligations or awards on behalf of NSF or authorize the expenditure of funds. No commitment on the part of NSF should be inferred from technical or budgetary discussions with a NSF Program Officer. A Principal Investigator or organization that makes financial or personnel commitments in the absence of a grant or cooperative agreement signed by the NSF Grants and Agreements Officer does so at one's own risk.

## **VII. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION**

### **A. Notification of the Award**

Notification of the award is made to *the submitting organization* by a Grants Officer in the Division of Grants and Agreements. Organizations whose proposals are declined will be advised as promptly as possible by the cognizant NSF Program Division administering the program. Verbatim copies of reviews, not including the identity of the reviewer, will be provided automatically to the Principal Investigator. (See section VI.A. for additional information on the review process.)

### **B. Award Conditions**

An NSF award consists of: (1) the award letter, which includes any special provisions applicable to the award and any numbered amendments thereto; (2) the budget, which indicates the amounts, by categories of expense, on which NSF has based its support (or otherwise communicates any specific approvals or disapprovals of proposed expenditures); (3) the proposal referenced in the award letter; (4) the applicable award conditions, such as Grant General Conditions (NSF-GC-1)\* or Federal Demonstration Partnership (FDP) Terms and Conditions;\* and (5) any announcement or other NSF issuance that may be incorporated by reference in the award letter. Cooperative agreement awards also are administered in accordance with NSF Cooperative Agreement Terms and Conditions (CA-1). Electronic mail notification is the preferred way to transmit NSF awards to organizations that have electronic mail capabilities and have requested such notification from the Division of Grants and Agreements.

\*These documents may be accessed electronically on NSF's Web site at [http://www.nsf.gov/home/grants/grants\\_gac.htm](http://www.nsf.gov/home/grants/grants_gac.htm). Paper copies may be obtained from the NSF Publications Clearinghouse, telephone (301) 947-2722 or by e-mail from [pubs@nsf.gov](mailto:pubs@nsf.gov).

More comprehensive information on NSF Award Conditions is contained in the NSF *Grant Policy Manual* (GPM) Chapter II, available electronically on the NSF Web site at <http://www.nsf.gov/cgi-bin/getpub?gpm>. The GPM is also for sale through the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office (GPO), Washington, DC 20402. The telephone number at GPO for subscription information is (202) 512-1800. The GPM may be ordered through the GPO Web site at <http://www.gpo.gov>.

## C. Reporting Requirements

For all multi-year grants (including both standard and continuing grants), the PI must submit an annual project report to the cognizant Program Officer at least 90 days before the end of the current budget period.

Within 90 days after the expiration of an award, the PI also is required to submit a final project report. Approximately 30 days before expiration, NSF will send a notice to remind the PI of the requirement to file the final project report. Failure to provide final technical reports delays NSF review and processing of pending proposals for that PI. PIs should examine the formats of the required reports in advance to assure availability of required data.

NSF has implemented an electronic project reporting system, available through FastLane. This system permits electronic submission and updating of project reports, including information on project participants (individual and organizational), activities and findings, publications, and other specific products and contributions. PIs will not be required to re-enter information previously provided, either with a proposal or in earlier updates using the electronic system.

## VIII. CONTACTS FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

General inquiries regarding University Radio Observatories Program should be made to:

- Dr. Richard Barvainis, Program Director, MPS, AST, 1045, telephone: 703-292-4891, e-mail: [rbarvai@nsf.gov](mailto:rbarvai@nsf.gov).

For questions related to the use of FastLane, contact:

- Ms. Kim Elliot, Computer Specialist, MPS, AST, 1045, telephone: 703-292-4894, e-mail: [kelliot@nsf.gov](mailto:kelliot@nsf.gov).

## IX. OTHER PROGRAMS OF INTEREST

The NSF *Guide to Programs* is a compilation of funding for research and education in science, mathematics, and engineering. The NSF *Guide to Programs* is available electronically at <http://www.nsf.gov/cgi-bin/getpub?gp>. General descriptions of NSF programs, research areas, and eligibility information for proposal submission are provided in each chapter.

Many NSF programs offer announcements or solicitations concerning specific proposal requirements. To obtain additional information about these requirements, contact the appropriate NSF program offices. Any changes in NSF's fiscal year programs occurring after press time for the *Guide to Programs* will be announced in the NSF [E-Bulletin](#), which is updated daily on the NSF web site at <http://www.nsf.gov/home/ebulletin>, and in individual program announcements/solicitations. Subscribers can also sign up for NSF's [Custom News Service](http://www.nsf.gov/home/cns/start.htm) (<http://www.nsf.gov/home/cns/start.htm>) to be notified of new funding opportunities that become available.

## **ABOUT THE NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION**

The National Science Foundation (NSF) funds research and education in most fields of science and engineering. Awardees are wholly responsible for conducting their project activities and preparing the results for publication. Thus, the Foundation does not assume responsibility for such findings or their interpretation.

NSF welcomes proposals from all qualified scientists, engineers and educators. The Foundation strongly encourages women, minorities and persons with disabilities to compete fully in its programs. In accordance with Federal statutes, regulations and NSF policies, no person on grounds of race, color, age, sex, national origin or disability shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving financial assistance from NSF (unless otherwise specified in the eligibility requirements for a particular program).

Facilitation Awards for Scientists and Engineers with Disabilities (FASSED) provide funding for special assistance or equipment to enable persons with disabilities (investigators and other staff, including student research assistants) to work on NSF-supported projects. See the program announcement/solicitation for further information.

The National Science Foundation has Telephonic Device for the Deaf (TDD) and Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) capabilities that enable individuals with hearing impairments to communicate with the Foundation about NSF programs, employment or general information. TDD may be accessed at (703) 292-5090, FIRS at 1-800-877-8339.

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## PRIVACY ACT AND PUBLIC BURDEN STATEMENTS

The information requested on proposal forms and project reports is solicited under the authority of the National Science Foundation Act of 1950, as amended. The information on proposal forms will be used in connection with the selection of qualified proposals; project reports submitted by awardees will be used for program evaluation and reporting within the Executive Branch and to Congress. The information requested may be disclosed to qualified reviewers and staff assistants as part of the proposal review process; to applicant institutions/grantees to provide or obtain data regarding the proposal review process, award decisions, or the administration of awards; to government contractors, experts, volunteers and researchers and educators as necessary to complete assigned work; to other government agencies needing information as part of the review process or in order to coordinate programs; and to another Federal agency, court or party in a court or Federal administrative proceeding if the government is a party. Information about Principal Investigators may be added to the Reviewer file and used to select potential candidates to serve as peer reviewers or advisory committee members. See Systems of Records, NSF-50, "Principal Investigator/Proposal File and Associated Records," 63 Federal Register 267 (January 5, 1998), and NSF-51, "Reviewer/Proposal File and Associated Records," 63 Federal Register 268 (January 5, 1998). Submission of the information is voluntary. Failure to provide full and complete information, however, may reduce the possibility of receiving an award.

Pursuant to 5 CFR 1320.5(b), an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to an information collection unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The OMB control number for this collection is 3145-0058. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 120 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions. Send comments regarding this burden estimate and any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to: Suzanne Plimpton, Reports Clearance Officer, Division of Administrative Services, National Science Foundation, Arlington, VA 22230, or to Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs of OMB, Attention: Desk Officer for National Science Foundation (3145-0058), 725 17th Street, N.W. Room 10235, Washington, D.C. 20503.

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